DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 327 555 TM 015 956

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TITLE	Education Information: Production and Quality Deserve Increased Attention. Statement before the Subcommittee on Government Information and Regulation, Committee on Government Affairs, U.S. Senate.
INSTITUTION	General Accounting Office, Washington, DC. Program Evaluation and Methodology Div.
REPORT NO	GAO/T-PEMD-90-7
PUB DATE	1 Nov 89
NOTE	28p.; Tables contain small print.
PUB TYPE	Legal/Legislative/Regulatory Materials (090) -- Reports - Descriptive (141)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	*Academic Achievement; Agency Role; *Data Collection; Educational Finance; *Educational Quality; Elementary Secondary Education; Excellence in Education; *Federal Programs; *Government Role; *Information Needs; Information Utilization; National Surveys; Outcomes of Education; Statistical Analysis; Trend Analysis
IDENTIFIERS	*Educational Information

ABSTRACT

This report concerning information on education in the United States addresses three questions: (1) what has happened over the past 15 years? (2) what are some reasons for the decline that has taken place in information gathering activity? and (3) how far does the problem in information gathering extend? Federally sponsored research and information gathering in the area of education has decreased dramatically, with a shift from data production toward dissemination and the investigation of fewer educational areas. A review conducted in 1987 established that the lack of economic resources was the major factor, in conjunction with the changes in congressional mandates, leadership, and educational priorities. Since that review, further declines have been noted. The review processes of the Office of Management and Budget also influence education information, narrowing the types of data collection approved. The use of local data requires major organizational efforts, and still bears many limitations. Recent developments suggest that the search for quality educational information is improving, but sizable efforts are required to properly assess the seemingly accessible world of schools, teachers, and students. An appendix contains five tables of fiscal data. (SLD)

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United States General Accounting Office

GAO Testimony

ED327555

For Release
on Delivery
Expected at
9:30 a.m. EST
Wednesday,
November 1, 1989

Education Information: Production and Quality Deserve Increased Attention

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Statement of
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Before the
Subcommittee on Government
Information and Regulation
Committee on Government Affairs
U.S. Senate

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Mr. Chairman and Members of the Subcommittee:

It is a pleasure to be here today to report to you on our work on information on education in the United States. I will be presenting central findings and implications that we have drawn in several recent studies and reports. We can report on our general evaluations of federal activities pertinent to education information, as well as on our specific experience as a consumer of such information generated in local school districts.

I want to address three questions:

-- First, what has happened, over roughly the past 15 years, to information about education? Despite the crucial importance of sound information to educational reform and oversight, and the clear federal role in obtaining such information, we do not have glad tidings. Considering federally sponsored activities only, we are doing less than we have done in the past and than is needed now to build the foundations for understanding education.

-- Second, what are some reasons for this decline in information-gathering activity? At least two reasons that are within fairly direct federal control are important. The first and, we believe, most important reason is the large decline in federal funds for the

purpose. We found a second reason in problems with the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) paperwork review process that particularly affect new, research-oriented data collection and that appear to be resulting in more-than-usual difficulty for the Department of Education.

-- Third, how far--that is, from national to local levels--does the problem extend? Our experience in a recent evaluation involving four school districts suggests that local data remain problematic for outsiders to use for purposes beyond those initially intended.

We need to know whether improvements already in progress will be enough. We believe changes now under way, particularly at the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), can lead to much-needed improvements in national data bases, if they receive continued support over the next few years and are not stymied by unnecessary red tape. NCES is not, however, the whole story. The reasons for the education information decline at the federal level are complex. Turning the situation around will take time. With an increasingly ambitious national agenda for evaluation and assessment, information users are likely to be frustrated unless the pace of improvement quickens. But such quickening is uncertain unless the problems of resources and technical capacity we see at present can be overcome.

The Importance of Information About Education

Although education in this country is the responsibility of the states, the federal government spent over $22 billion in fiscal year 1989 to support all levels of education. In 1867, the Congress authorized the creation of a noncabinet Department of Education to obtain information on the condition of education for purposes of identifying emerging needs, determining how well programs are working, and promoting educational improvement. The authorization has continued and expanded over the years.[1] I think that today, no less than in 1867, it is critical to have high-quality information for overseeing federal educational resources, assessing the progress the nation has made in improving educational access and quality, and identifying shortfalls yet to be dealt with successfully. By high-quality information, I mean information that is relevant, timely, technically adequate, and usable for policy decisions.

Declines in the Production of Information

In 1987, we reported on three kinds of information: research,

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[1]Although education was not given cabinet status until the establishment of the Department of Education in 1979, we refer to the federal education agency at any point in time as the department. Similarly, although the name of the statistics unit has varied, we refer to it consistently by its current name, National Center for Education Statistics.

evaluation of federal programs, and statistics.[2] We found that federally sponsored research, statistical and evaluative information on education had declined dramatically during the previous decade. For example,

-- research grants and contracts awarded decreased from 476 in 1980 to 168 in 1985;

-- evaluation awards declined as well, from 80 or more awards annually in the late 1970's and a peak of 119 in 1980 to between 25 and 28 annually, that is, a decline of 79 percent from 1980 to 1985;

-- statistical surveys planned or conducted by the National Center for Education Statistics grew from 37 to 55 in the period 1974 to 1980 but then dropped again to the 1974 level by 1983, as intervals between data collections increased (more one-time and occasional surveys) and states got less technical support for data gathering.

Shifts in Priorities, Focus, and Information Producers

Not only was less information produced by the end of the period we

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[2]The complete study is presented in our report Education Information: Changes in Funds and Priorities Have Affected Production and Quality, GAO/PEMD-88-4 (Washington, D.C.: November 4, 1987).

reviewed; we also found changes in what was examined and by whom. First, when we reviewed research priorities, we saw a shift away from new data production to service-oriented activity such as the dissemination of results. Sixty-five percent of awards in the National Institute of Education in 1980 were for new data collection; only 11 percent (of awards in the Office of Research which succeeded NIE) went for this purpose in 1985. We believe this shift was so dramatic that the availability of up-to-date information to disseminate to teachers and other practitioners may have become seriously jeopardized.

Second, we found that fewer educational areas were investigated through research grants in 1985 than in 1980. In 1980, for example, 56 of 293 awards for new data collection went toward studies of special populations such as minorities and women. In 1985, there were 5 such studies. Some areas such as learning in nonschool settings and areas identified as "school problems" (including such issues as dropouts and delinquency) received no new data collection funds in 1985; in 1980, there were 33 awards. Even for the topics that have been frequently identified as important areas for educational improvement--for example, improving teacher preparation; strengthening curricula in mathematics, science, and English; more effective instruction; classroom management and school leadership--there were few awards for new data collection in 1985.

Third, there was a shift among those who carried out the work of producing information. The proportion of research awards made to department-sponsored institutions (for example, laboratories and national research centers) increased substantially from 1980 to 1985. In 1980, those institutions received 25 percent of the awards in three major program areas, compared to 56 percent in 1985. The cumulative result of various shifts in awards was that the majority of the department's information producers were institutions or contractors. We noted in our 1987 report that this shift is a concern, since contracts can potentially constrain rather than broaden inquiry, and they may be applicable less to research than to gathering specific information such as under a mandate or consistent data across time such as in statistical series.

Concern for the Quality of Information

In our 1987 review, we looked at four indicators: relevance, timeliness, technical adequacy, and impact of three statistical series, the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), the Common Core of Data for elementary and secondary education, and the Fast Response Survey System. (The examples did not represent all education information and our conclusions cannot be generalized. However, the examples allowed us to look in depth at important series, ones that exemplified varied data collection strategies and that used a good deal of the department's resources.) We found

that

-- NAEP ranked high on all four dimensions, but it had suffered some decline in relevance and timeliness in adapting to fiscal constraints, for example reducing the number of age groups assessed from five to three and assessing each subject area less often;

-- the Common Core of Data was not rated high on any of our four indicators, and longstanding problems included noncomparable data across the states; however, we have seen commendable recent efforts to improve some parts of the Common Core of Data;

-- the Fast Response Survey System was rated moderate to high in quality, although we noted some technical areas where there could be improvement.

Complex Influences on Production and Quality

Turning to my second question -- What are some of the reasons for the situation we observed? -- I can report on several areas we looked into. We found that resources play a major role but that lack of money was not the only issue.

Funding

Although the fiscal resources of the overall Department of Education increased 220 percent in current dollars from 1973 to 1986, from $6.1 to $19.5 billion (or 38 percent in constant 1972 dollars), the trends in support of research, statistics, and evaluation were quite different. Since the mid-1970's,

-- the National Institute of Education (and its successor offices) experienced a 79-percent reduction (in constant 1972 dollars);

-- the National Center for Education Statistics experienced a 65-percent reduction; and

-- the Office of Planning, Budget, and Evaluation's (OPBE's) resources declined by 64 percent.

These reductions are a sharp contrast to the 38-percent overall increase in federal investment in education in the same period.

We also looked beyond the Department of Education for a perspective on research and development (R&D) funding elsewhere in federal departments and agencies.[3] We found that

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[3]See R&D Funding: The Department of Education in Perspective, GAO/PEMD-88-18FS (Washington, D.C.: May 13, 1988).

-- research and development budget obligations in major agencies (including defense) between 1980 and 1987 increased 24 percent (in constant 1980 dollars);

-- major departments' resources for R&D varied greatly, however, with five growing and eight declining in the period; declines varied from 2 percent to 47 percent, and the Department of Education showed a 33-percent reduction;

-- considering eight major federal statistical units, we found that they experienced in the aggregate a real decline of [illegible]ercent in budget authority between 1980 and 1986; de[illegible]tments' individual statistics units varied, one (the Bureau of the Census) experiencing growth while the rest declined; resources for the National Center for Education Statistics declined more than the average, with a 34-percent reduction;

-- federal program evaluation activities experienced a general reduction in available fiscal resources in the early 1980's; aside from the Department of Defense, departments' fiscal resources for evaluation in 1984 were 44 percent lower than in 1980; here, the Department of Education's decline was less than some others, at 34 percent; the decline continued, though not as steeply,

across agencies when we looked again in 1988.[4]

These declines are illustrated by the tables given in the appendix, taken from our report on education research and development in perspective. As they indicate, these declines occurred when the obligations for research and development increased 81 percent in constant dollars for the Department of Defense and declined by 33 percent for the Department of Education and declined as well in other nondefense agencies such as Transportation (39 percent), Interior (35 percent), and Environmental Protection (29 percent).

Statistical units were particularly hard-hit. Except for an increase of 12 percent for the Bureau of the Census, other federal statistical units by 1986 lost more than 20 percent of their 1980 purchasing power, including a 34-percent loss for NCES.

Despite these losses in purchasing power, between fiscal years 1982 and 1986, the budget estimate to the Congress for educational research and statistics and the eventual appropriation were about the same and remained roughly level; more recently, requests have begun to rise. Even so, across the years 1983 through 1988, the administration never requested enough to place the purchasing power for education research and statistics at even 60 percent of the 1980 appropriation level.

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[4]Our review of evaluation resources, updated to 1988, is in Program Evaluation Issues, GAO/OCG-89-8TR (Washington, D.C.: November 1988).

The Role of Mandates

Congressionally mandated activities received smaller reductions than other work and thereby consumed an increasing share of available resources. For example, while 55 percent of research resources in 1980 went to legislatively required activities such as the Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC) and the regional education laboratories and research centers, that figure increased to 79 percent by 1984. Information-gathering activity that did not carry a mandate was more vulnerable in times of fiscal constraint. And, of course, mandates cannot ensure that high-quality information is produced. For example, the National Vocational Education Data System was mandated in 1976, but the information-collection request was disapproved by the Office of Management and Budget a few years later on grounds of severe technical problems. No resources were specially appropriated, reporting schedules proved unrealistic, and the whole plan was mandated with little consultation with the department.

Changes in Leadership and Priorities

Changes in leadership and priorities also affected the production and quality of information in the period we reviewed. Top management changed in each of the information units in the 1980's. The National Institute of Education had a total of seven different

directors from 1980 to 1986, three of the seven serving as acting director. At least 16 other persons served in five other top management positions, one of which was created in 1984. NCES and OPBE showed similar patterns. We found examples of major research-funding initiatives under development for some years cancelled by a new director who had different priorities.

The Department's View and Recent Developments

Thus, in 1987, we described a complex situation in which some of the problems such as with statistical reporting systems are longstanding. We told the House authorizing subcommittee in April 1988 that it would be neither quick nor easy to turn the situation around, involving as it does funds, how priorities are set, leadership and staffing, and other factors.[5]

The Department of Education's comments on our draft report in 1987 disagreed, citing many organizational changes since 1985 that the department believed constituted "clear and decisive action to address most of the problems cited in the report" and claiming to have augmented the information portfolio and broadened topical areas. We believed it was too early to claim whether the changes initiated adequately addressed the problems we identified.

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[5]See "Production and Quality of Education Information," statement of Eleanor Chelimsky before the Subcommittee on Select Education, House of Representatives, GAO/T-PEMD-88-4, Washington, D.C., April 20, 1988.

We have not reviewed the situation in detail since then, to gather the fine-grained information we believe is needed to properly evaluate information programs. More important, the department itself, in responding to our review, did not appear to have plans for empirical evaluation of progress in improving education information. The new Assistant Secretary for Educational Research and Improvement has, however, called for an independent review of the department's work in this area, which could offer an opportunity for the kind of evaluation we believe is needed. For example, the kinds of questions we urged be addressed included the areas being investigated, target groups studied, how research agendas are developed, procurement methods employed, balance among priorities such as new data collection versus support services such as dissemination, the match between information-gathering plans and questions posed by a wide range of audiences, and of course the technical quality of sponsored work. Information on these topics can provide a basis for evaluating the decisions that have been made.

Updating several of our analyses of trends in the quantity of education information and in support for information-gathering activity, we found a mixed picture. For example,

-- the downward trend in awards for research and related activities continued, from 168 in 1985 to 79 in 1989, and

the proportion of awards representing mandated activities continued to grow;

-- the downward trends in number and overall dollar value of evaluation awards in OPBE from 1980 to 1985 reversed, with increases from 20 in 1986 to 36 in 1988, although these numbers remain small compared to the 84-119 awards made annually from 1975 to 1980;

-- overall resources allocated for evaluation in education (staff as well as contract awards) continue on a downward trend even in current dollars, let alone constant ones, declining from $20.6 million in fiscal year 1984 to $18.2 million in 1988; and finally

-- the downward trend in funding for research and statistics has reversed and appropriations (in current dollars) have risen since 1986, reaching $78.2 million in fiscal year 1989 and a projected $96.4 million (presequestration) for this year, though still substantially below earlier levels in constant dollars.

Thus, in summary, since our last full review, resources continued to decline absolutely, or failed to regain earlier lost purchasing power. Not surprisingly, quantity indicators declined further or grew only slowly towards former levels. Inevitably, therefore, we

are gathering much less information than in earlier years despite the large increase in interest in the performance of the nation's education system.

The Role of OMB's Review Procedures

OMB's paperwork review process is a second major influence on education information.[6] This happens in three different ways: the department experienced greater difficulty than most; in general, the types of data needed for research and evaluation were less often approved; and the quality of data to be collected is not assured by OMB's review because the review process is not as strong technically as it could be.

In our recent review of how OMB handled information-collection requests from 1982 to 1987 we found that while approval of agencies' requests is common, the relatively high rate is not applicable to all agencies or all kinds of requests. Of the 211 agencies we reviewed, 117 had approval rates of 95 percent or more in 1985-87, but the Department of Education was less successful. Its overall approval rate was 89 percent for that period (and 86 percent in the prior period, 1982-84).

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[6]See Paperwork Reduction: Mixed Effects on Agency Decision Processes and Data Availability, GAO/PEMD-89-20 (Washington, D.C.: September 7, 1989), and Paperwork Reduction: Little Real Burden Change in Recent Years, GAO/PEMD-89-19FS (Washington, D.C.: June 14, 1989).

The approval rate for the Office of Educational Research and Improvement, which includes both research and statistical activities, was 93 percent for 1985-87. For the Office of Planning, Budget, and Evaluation the rate was 69 percent. In addition, program units of the department such as the offices of Elementary and Secondary, Post-Secondary, and Special Education all had approval rates below the common 95 percent level, with the latter two exhibiting lower approval rates consistently since 1982-84.

Research, evaluation, and statistical information in education may have been especially affected by OMB's review process, as we found across all agencies that that type of information request was approved less frequently than others. New (as opposed to recurrent) data collection requests were less often approved also. Requests which were both new, and centered on research, evaluation, and statistical information, were approved the least often of all. In an active, evolving information-gathering program, that seems just the sort of request likely to predominate.

Our evaluation of OMB's procedures raises cautions about whether the review assures quality. Disapproval of a request might signal a healthy concern for technical quality in data-gathering proposals, but we found that was not the predominant rationale for disapprovals. Nor can approval be taken as a reliable indicator of technical soundness. We found that OMB's paperwork review

officers had limited technical training and limited technical guidance. Our independent review of a sample of cases showed some requests OMB approved were technically flawed.

Taken together, these findings suggest that specific education information-collection has been narrowed by OMB's review, and that in general precisely the kinds of information needed on education are especially prone to disapproval--research, evaluations, and statistics. In addition, problems in OMB's own technical review capability highlight the need for strong capacity at the agency level, capacity which is hard to maintain as funds decline, leadership and priorities change, as I noted above.

Local Education Data as a National Resource

Recent discussion of higher goals for education outcomes leads to plans for expanded assessment of how well we are reaching those goals, which in turn puts a spotlight on schools' data. Turning now to my third question -- How far do problems extend with educational information? -- I will conclude with observations from our recent evaluation of the initial effects of education reform in four school districts in four states.[7] In that study, we gained firsthand knowledge of current problems with using local data. We cannot generalize from our experience, and significant effort is

[7]See Education Reform: Initial Effects in Four School Districts, GAO/PEMD-89-28 (Washington, D.C.: September 26, 1989).

being made by officials of the National Center for Education Statistics and nongovernment groups such as the Council of Chief State School Officers to improve data gathered at all levels so that national aggregate figures are increasingly reliable. Still, our experience may hint at the magnitude of the challenge they face.

To evaluate the effects of increased high school graduation requirements on at-risk youths, we planned the first multi-state empirical study to assess achievement and other outcomes. Ruling out use of existing national data or new data collection, we hoped to rely on existing data in school archives. We selected four states that had introduced comparable reforms a few years earlier, so some measurable effects could have occurred. We then searched for districts with adequate data to allow us to compose two panels of students for comparison, one group that was the last class to enter high school under the prereform requirements, and another that was the first to enter under the postreform requirements. To determine the educational effects of the requirements we wanted to know the courses students took each year and their test scores and dropout history. To establish at-risk subgroups for analysis, we looked for data on age (to find students older than the rule for their grade), gender, race, family socioeconomic level, limited-English status where relevant, and prehigh-school test-score history.

In brief, despite the excellent cooperation we received from school districts attempting to meet our admittedly specialized data requests, assembling the needed computer files was much more difficult than we expected, and our evaluation design had to be modified as limitations of the data surfaced, though we willingly paid for overtime programming assistance to merge files to meet our needs. We began working with five urban school districts, one of which, after months of work, finally could not provide usable data in time for the study. (We were unable to find any rural districts with enough experience with education reform, suitable student populations, and computerized data bases holding data we needed.) Within the remaining four school districts, there were numerous problems with the data we used from the records of 61,000 students:

-- limited computerized student background data narrowed our ability to track separate at-risk groups,

-- limited data on dropouts meant we could analyze that outcome only in two districts (which kept track of a dropout registered elsewhere), and

-- limited computerized transcript data made it impossible to track reform effects on courses students took in two of the four districts.

We were, finally, with great difficulty, able to measure effects of

the reform, but had to conclude our report by acknowledging some limitations resulting from data problems at the local level. We encouraged additional evaluation to see what was happening with later student groups as educators gained experience in implementing reform. However, in view of the effort we had to make, it is unclear how many others will be in a position to follow our lead.

Observations and Conclusions

Mr. Chairman, I believe this review illustrates some major issues concerning the adequacy of education information.

We are concerned about the kind, quantity, and quality of education information. Despite recent increases, the resources for this function are much lower than they were in earlier years, while demands for data and understanding are increasing. The central review function needs improvement as well. Finally, local data require major efforts to aggregate for analysis, and even then they have many limitations.

Our ability to precisely discuss data and indicators in other sectors such as the economy, or to explore unknown territory with innovative methods that yield color photographs from the moons of Neptune or the bottom of the sea, is not yet matched in our search for understanding of the seemingly mundane and accessible world of schools, teachers, and students. We believe recent developments in

the Department of Education move us notably ahead, including specific data improvements and the proposal for a new independent evaluation of the condition of information that would establish a useful updated baseline to measure progress against and set priorities for further effort. Still, our work suggests that sizable further work lies before us if we are to properly assess common schooling, not to mention any new wave of reforms or the world of education beyond the schoolroom.

APPENDIX

Table 1

Budget Obligations for Research and Development by Major Department and Agency 1980 and 1987[a]

Department or agency	1980	1987		Real change 1980-87
		Current	Constant 1980[b]	
Education	$132	$124	$88	−33
Defense	13,943	36,088	25,236	+81
Agriculture	687	946	671	−2
Commerce	341	405	287	−16
Energy	4,737	4,724	3,350	−29
Health and Human Services	3,790	6,643	4,711	+24
Interior	438	403	286	−35
Transportation	374	322	228	−39
Agency for International Development	119	223	158	+33
Environmental Protection Agency	348	348	247	−29
National Aeronautics and Space Administration	5,084	3,787	2,686	−47
National Science Foundation	888	1,464	1,038	+17
Veterans Administration	133	210	149	+12
All other agencies	669	404	287	−57
Total	**$31,682**	**$56,089**	**$39,424**	+24

[a]Dollars are for fiscal years in millions. Does not include departments or agencies with research and development budget obligations of less than $10 million. Total may not add because of rounding.

[b]Constant 1980 dollars were calculated by using fixed-weighted price indexes for federal government purchase of services in defense or nondefense sectors, as appropriate. Indexes were obtained from the Bureau of Economic Analysis in the Department of Commerce.

Source: Office of Management and Budget, Special Analyses, Budget of the United States Government (Washington, D.C., 1981) and other data provided by the Office of Management and Budget.

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Table 2

Budget Obligations for Research and Development in the Department of Education 1980-87[a]

Fiscal year	Current	Constant 1980[b]
1980	$132	$132
1981	141	127
1982	154	127
1983	103	81
1984	109	83
1985	111	82
1986	117	85
1987	124	88

[a]Dollars are in millions and include research and development only. Table does not include support of facilities.

[b]Constant dollars are calculated by using the fixed-weighted price index for federal nondefense purchase of services other than employee compensation.

Source: The Office of Management Budget and price indexes reported by the Bureau of Economic Analysis in the Department of Commerce.

Table 3

Budget Authority for Major Statistical Units 1980 and 1986[a]

Statistical unit	1980	1986		Real change 1980-86
		Current[b]	Constant 1980	
Education				
Center for Education Statistics[c]	$14.9	$14.0	$9.9	−34%
Agriculture				
National Agricultural Statistics Service[d]	49.0	57.2	40.3	−18
Commerce				
Census Bureau[e]	53.7	85.8	60.4	+12
Bureau of Economic Analysis[d]	15.8	21.1	14.9	−6
Energy				
Energy Information Administration	90.8	58.9	41.5	−54
Health and Human Services				
National Center for Health Statistics	43.3	48.0	33.8	−22
Justice				
Bureau of Justice Statistics	16.3	19.1	13.4	−18
Labor				
Bureau of Labor Statistics[f]	102.9	129.5	91.2	−11
Total	**$386.7**	**$433.6**	**$305.4**	**−21%**

[a]Dollars are for fiscal years in millions.

[b]Figures for 1986 are administration requests.

[c]Includes program funding, salaries, and expenses from other accounts.

[d]Formerly the Statistical Reporting Service.

[e]Includes current programs only. Does not include transfers from other agencies.

[f]Excludes transfers from other agencies and activities to revise the consumer price index.

Source: U.S. House of Representatives, Committee on Government Operations, An Update on the Status of Major Federal Statistical Agencies, Fiscal Year 1986 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1985), p. CRS-6.

Table 4

Fiscal Resources for Evaluation Units in Nondefense Departments 1980 and 1984[a]

Department	1980	1984 Current	1984 Constant 1980[b]	Real change 1980-84
Education	$23.9	$20.6	$15.7	−3
Agriculture	17.8	24.4	18.6	+
Energy	4.3	1.2	0.9	−7
Health and Human Services	39.1	28.5	21.8	−4
Housing and Urban Development	11.3	8.0	6.1	−4
Interior	6.3	2.9	2.2	−6
Justice	16.8	4.6	3.5	−7
Labor	20.6	5.9	4.5	−7
State	1.5	4.5	3.4	+12
Transportation	3.6	3.4	2.6	−2
Treasury	2.9	4.7	3.6	+2
Total	**$148.1**	**$108.7**	**$82.9**	**−4**

[a]Dollars are for fiscal years in millions. Data are based on estimates reported by evaluation units late in each of the 2 fiscal years. Estimates include total resources, regardless of funding source or fiscal year in which funds were obligated. The Department of Commerce is not included because it reported no evaluation units in 1984; fiscal resources for the department's evaluation units in 1980 were reported as $13.0 million. Data from the Department of Defense are not available.

[b]Constant 1980 dollars were calculated by using the fixed-weighted price index for federal government nondefense purchase of services other than employee compensation. This is a more accurate index than the one available for our report entitled Federal Evaluation: Fewer Units, Reduced Resources, Different Studies From 1980, GAO/PEMD-87-9 (Washington, D.C.: January 1987). The difference in results, however, is not large. The total percentage change in fiscal resources presented in that report was −41 percent rather than the −44 percent shown in this table.

Table 5

Education Research and Statistics Budget Requests and Appropriations 1980-88[a]

Fiscal year	Price index	Budget estimate to the Congress		Appropriation	
		Current	Constant 1980	Current	Consta 19
1980	1.00	$95.120	$95.120	$84.061	$84.0
1981	1.11	84.061	75.731	74.561	67.1
1982	1.21	62.392	51.564	61.979	51.2
1983	1.27	62.392	49.128	64.203	50.5
1984	1.31	56.978	43.495	56.978	43.4
1985	1.35	62.978	46.650	59.978	44.4
1986	1.37	59.978	43.462	59.978	43.7
1987	1.41	70.231	49.809	63.578	45.0
1988	1.46[b]	70.231	48.103[b]	67.526	46.2

[a]Dollars are in millions

[b]Estimate

Source: Department of Education research and statistics fiscal year 1988 budget request; U.S. House of Representatives, Making Further Continuing Appropriations for the Fiscal Year Ending September 30, 1988, conference committee report number 100-498 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1987); and price indexes supplied by the Bureau of Economic Analysis in the Department of Commerce.